

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11 ACDA-05 OMB-01 SCCT-01 /077 W

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R 101331Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9113

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, LE, SY, EG

SUBJECT: PRESS ATTACKS KHADDAM STATEMENT AND ARAB LEAGUE
PASSIVITY ON LEBANON

1. CAIRO PRESS JANUARY 10 HIGHLIGHTS RENEWAL OF FIERCE
LEBANESE FIGHTING AND DEVOTES PRINCIPAL EDITORIALS
TO ITS IMPLICATIONS.

2. AHRAM'S CHIEF EDITOR ALI HAMDI AL-GAMAL IN FRONT
PAGE EDITORIAL ENTITLED "PLAYING WITH FIRE" WRITES THAT
KHADDAM STATEMENT UNMASKS SYRIAN INTENTIONS TOWARD
LEBANON AND POINTS OUT FOLLOWING CONSEQUENCES OF THIS
"TERRIBLE" SYRIAN ERROR: (A) WELL KNOWN ISRAELI INTENTION
TO OCCUPY SOUTH LEBANON AND FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY THAT
KHADDAM HAS NOW "VOLUNTARILY FURNISHED" ISRAEL. HE
ASKS: "ISN'T IT BETTER FOR SYRIA, IF SHE HAS ABILITY TO
OCCUPY LEBANON, TO LIBERATE HER OWN TERRITORY FIRST?".

(B) PLO WILL NOW FIND ITSELF AT UNSC DEBATE IN
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UNFAVORABLE POSITION BECAUSE DETERIORATING LEBANESE

SITUATION AND KHADDAM STATEMENT HAVE GIVEN ISRAEL LEVERAGE TO BECOME MORE STUBBORN VIS-A-VIS THE PALESTINIANS; AND (C) HAS SYRIA'S DIRECT INTERVENTION PREVENTED LEBANESE MASSACRE? IS INTERVENTION IN INTEREST OF LEBANON OR SYRIAN BA'ATH PARTY GOVERNMENT? DOES BA 'ATH WANT TO COVER ITS FAILURE TO FIND SOLUTION BY PLAYING ROLE OF SAMSON IN ME? AHRAM CONCLUDES THAT ALL THIS IS HAPPENING AS RESULT OF WHAT SYRIA AND REJECTION FRONT HAVE DONE AND WHEN "WE SAID HANDS OFF LEBANON WE WERE AWARE OF THIS CONSPIRACY AGAINST A SOVEREIGN ARAB COUNTRY."

3. CHIEF EDITOR OF GUMHURRIYA MOHSEN MOHAMMAD IS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF "MOST DISHEARTENING" STATEMENT MADE YESTERDAY BY ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN MAHMUD RIAD THAT CRUX OF LEBANESE PROBLEM IS INTERNAL CONDITIONS IN LEBANON AND IGNORING KHADDAM STATEMENT. EDITORIAL THEN REVIEWS INEFFECTIVENESS OF FORMER ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN IN THEIR SEARCH FOR PERSONAL POPULARITY DURING PREVIOUS ARAB CRISES AND BY IMPLICATION ACCUSES RIAD OF DOING SAME. EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT, IF RIAD REFRAINS FROM TELLING WHOLE TRUTH AND POINTING OUT THREATS INVOLVED IN KHADDAM'S STATEMENTS AND IN ABSENCE OF ARAB MOVE TO STOP SYRIAN AND ISRAELI THREATS, LEBANON MAY BE PARTITIONED BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL.

4. COMMENT: AHRAM EDITORIAL IS ACCURATE REFLECTIONS OF HIGH LEVEL EGYPTIAN VIEW ABOUT SYRIA'S ROLE AND GREAT DANGER LEBANESE SITUATION REPRESENTS TO ENTIRE SADAT STRATEGY. GUMHURRIYA EDITORIAL IS EQUALLY ACCURATE REFLECTION OF INCREASING FRUSTRATION OF MANY EGYPTIANS OVER ARAB LEAGUE (AND GOE'S) APPARENT INABILITY TO INFLUENCE EVENTS IN LEBANON. IT IS IN ADDITION STRONGEST PUBLIC ATTACK ON MAHMUD RIAD IN RECENT MONTHS.
EILTS

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